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Agenda item 65

Reduction of military budgets

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Motaz M. **Zahran** (Egypt)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled:

"Reduction of military budgets:

"(a) Reduction of military budgets;

"(b) Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures"

was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolutions 35/142 B of 12 December 1980 and 52/32 of 9 December 1997.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 17 September 1998, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 63 to 79, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 12 to 16 and from 19 to 21 October (see A/C.1/53/PV.3–12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 14th to 21st meetings, on 23 and from 27 to 30 October and on 2 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.14–21). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 22nd to 31st meetings, from 3 to 6 and on 9, 10, 12 and 13 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.22–31).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures (A/53/218).

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II. Consideration of proposals

A. Reduction of military budgets

5. No proposal was submitted under sub-item (a).

B. Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.30

6. At the 19th meeting, on 30 October, the representative of Germany, on behalf of *Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta,* the *Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal,* the *Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine* and the *United States of America*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures" (A/C.1/53/L.30). Subsequently, *Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil,* the *Czech Republic, Fiji, Monaco, Turkey* and the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

7. At its 23rd meeting, on 4 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.30 without a vote (see para. 8).

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

8. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 52/32 of 9 December 1997 on objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures,

Also recalling its resolution 35/142 B of 12 December 1980, which introduced the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, and its resolutions 48/62 of 16 December 1993, 49/66 of 15 December 1994 and 51/38 of 10 December 1996, calling upon all Member States to participate in it, and its resolution 47/54 B of 9 December 1992, endorsing the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters and inviting Member States to provide relevant information to the Secretary-General regarding their implementation,

Noting that since then national reports on military expenditures and on the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters have been submitted by a number of Member States belonging to different geographic regions,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General[1] on ways and means to implement the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, including,

[1] A/53/218.

in particular, how to strengthen and broaden participation in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures,

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General for providing Member States with the reports on military expenditures in standardized form reported by States and on the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters,

Welcoming the decision of many Member States to exchange and to publish information annually on their military budgets and to implement the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters, as appropriate,

Noting the decision taken by the Conference on Disarmament to reappoint a Special Coordinator on transparency in armaments to seek the views of the members of the Conference on the most appropriate way to deal with the questions related to this item,[2]

Noting also the efforts of several regional organizations to promote transparency of military expenditures, including standardized annual exchanges of relevant information among their member States,

Reaffirming its firm conviction that a better flow of objective information on military matters can help to relieve international tension and contribute to the building of confidence among States and to the conclusion of concrete disarmament agreements,

Convinced that the improvement of international relations forms a sound basis for promoting further openness and transparency in all military matters,

Recalling that the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters recommended certain areas for further consideration, such as the improvement of the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures,

1. *Recommends* the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters to all Member States for implementation, fully taking into account specific political, military and other conditions prevailing in a region, on the basis of initiatives and with the agreement of the States of the region concerned;

2. *Welcomes* the resumption on 23 April 1998 by the Secretary-General of consultations with relevant international bodies with a view to ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present instrument to encourage wider participation;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for providing Member States with a report[1] on the outcome of those consultations containing, *inter alia*, recommendations on ways and means to enhance the participation in the standardized reporting instrument;

4. *Calls upon* all Member States to report annually, by 30 April, to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, using, preferably and to the extent possible, the reporting instrument as recommended in its resolution 35/142 B or, as appropriate, any other format developed in conjunction with similar reporting on military expenditures to other international or regional organizations;

5. *Encourages* relevant international bodies and regional organizations to promote transparency of military expenditures and to enhance complementarity among reporting systems, taking into account the particular characteristics of each region;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/53/27), para. 8.

(a) To resume the practice of sending an annual note verbale to Member States requesting the submission of data to the reporting system, together with the reporting format and related instructions, and to publish in a timely fashion in appropriate United Nations media the due date for transmitting data on military expenditures;

(b) To promote international and regional symposia and training seminars to explain the purpose of the United Nations standardized reporting system on military expenditures and to give relevant technical instructions;

(c) To circulate annually the reports on military expenditures as received from Member States;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue consultations with relevant international bodies, within existing resources, with a view to ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present instrument to encourage wider participation, with emphasis on examining possibilities for enhancing complementarity among international and regional reporting systems and to exchange related information with those bodies;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make recommendations, based on the outcome of those consultations and taking into account the views of Member States, on necessary changes to the content and structure of the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures in order to strengthen and broaden participation, and to submit a report on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session;

9. *Calls upon* all Member States, in time for the deliberation by the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, to provide the Secretary-General with their views on the analysis and the recommendations contained in his report[1] and with further suggestions to strengthen and broaden participation in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, including necessary changes to its content and structure;

10. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures".

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Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Motaz M. **Zahran** (Egypt)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 52/33 of 9 December 1997.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 17 September 1998, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 63 to 79, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 12 to 16 and from 19 to 21 October (see A/C.1/53/PV.3–12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 14th to 21st meetings, on 23 and from 27 to 30 October and on 2 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.14–21). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 22nd to 31st meetings, from 3 to 6 and on 9, 10 12 and 13 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.22–31).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament (A/53/202).

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II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.15

5. At the 17th meeting, the representative of India, on behalf of *Bangladesh, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Cuba,* the *Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guyana, India, Indonesia,* the *Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya,* the *Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka* and *Viet Nam*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" (A/C.1.53/L.15).

6. At its 24th meeting, on 5 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.15 by a recorded vote of 77 to 43, with 16 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows:[1]

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen.

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Ukraine, Uruguay.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

[1] The delegation of Jordan subsequently indicated that, had it been present, it would have voted in favour.

Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that scientific and technological developments can have both civilian and military applications and that progress in science and technology for civilian applications needs to be maintained and encouraged,

Concerned that military applications of scientific and technological developments can contribute significantly to the improvement and upgrading of advanced weapon systems and in particular weapons of mass destruction,

Aware of the need to follow closely the scientific and technological developments that may have a negative impact on international security and disarmament, and to channel scientific and technological developments for beneficial purposes,

Cognizant that the international transfers of dual-use as well as high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes are important for the economic and social development of States,

Also cognizant of the need to regulate such transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications through multilaterally negotiated, universally applicable, non-discriminatory guidelines,

Expressing concern over the growing proliferation of ad hoc and exclusive export control regimes and arrangements for dual-use goods and technologies, which tend to impede the economic and social development of developing countries,

Recalling that the Final Document of the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998,[2] noted with concern that undue restrictions on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes persist,

Emphasizing that internationally negotiated guidelines for the transfer of high technology with military applications should take into account the legitimate defence requirements of all States and the requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that access to high-technology products and services and know-how for peaceful purposes is not denied,

1. *Affirms* that scientific and technological progress should be used for the benefit of all mankind to promote the sustainable economic and social development of all States and to safeguard international security, and that international cooperation in the use of science and technology through the transfer and exchange of technological know-how for peaceful purposes should be promoted;

2. *Invites* Member States to undertake additional efforts to apply science and technology for disarmament-related purposes and to make disarmament-related technologies available to interested States;

3. *Urges* Member States to undertake multilateral negotiations with the participation of all interested States in order to establish universally acceptable, non-discriminatory guidelines for international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications;

[2] A/53/667–S/1998/1071, annex I.

4. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament,[3] and requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of the Member States on that report and to make recommendations on the possible approaches to multilaterally negotiated, universally acceptable, non-discriminatory guidelines for international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technologies with military applications, in a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly no later than at its fifty-fourth session;

5. *Encourages* United Nations bodies to contribute, within existing mandates, to promoting the application of science and technology for peaceful purposes;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament".

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[3] A/53/202